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December 18, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Legislative Education Study Committee

FR: Peter B. van Moorsel *PvM*

**RE: STAFF REPORT: P-20 INITIATIVE: COMMON PUBLIC EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT AND HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT STUDENT ID**

BACKGROUND

Realizing that reliable data are critical to educational research and policy development, the 2005 Legislature included language in the *General Appropriation Act* to establish a comprehensive data warehouse at the Public Education Department (PED) to begin to collect and store student, teacher, course, testing, and financial data in one comprehensive system. In addition, the Legislature has supported the implementation of this comprehensive data warehouse, known as the Student Teacher Accountability Reporting System (STARS), with appropriations of approximately \$14.0 million (including \$2.9 million for FY 09) to PED, including four full-time equivalent positions. During the 2007 interim, the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) heard committee staff testimony on the development of data warehouses nationally and in New Mexico, some of it derived from the Data Quality Campaign¹ of the Education Commission of the States.

Even before the development of STARS, the Legislature, through legislation endorsed by the LESC, implemented several initiatives directed toward providing New Mexico with a single, unified data system that can exchange information within and across pre-K through

¹ The Data Quality Campaign is a national, collaborative effort to encourage and support state policymakers to: (1) improve the collection, availability, and use of high-quality education data; and (2) implement state longitudinal data systems to improve student achievement. The campaign is managed by the National Center for Education Achievement, a nonprofit, non-partisan organization and an initiative of the Education Commission of the States.

postsecondary education and allow the state to continue monitoring achievement as students move from place to place through the education pipeline. Most recently, legislation enacted in 2007 (1) requires the Higher Education Department (HED) to use the PED student ID number for students enrolled in higher education in order to facilitate longitudinal research; and (2) requires PED to collaborate with public teacher preparation programs and HED to create a uniform statewide teacher education accountability reporting system (TEARS) to measure and track teacher candidates from pre-entry to post-graduation in order to benchmark the productivity and accountability of New Mexico's teacher work force.

During the 2007 interim, the LESC received a presentation describing the work of the Data Sharing Task Force, which HED convened in response to a request from the LESC to plan the implementation of a common P-20 student ID. According to staff testimony, the work was to proceed through three phases:

- Phase 1: extending the student ID system in STARS into higher education to identify public school students with an existing STARS-issued ID and to assign a unique ID for students who enter a public postsecondary institution from outside the public school system or outside New Mexico (to begin July 1, 2008, at a cost of nearly \$2.0 million);
- Phase 2: expanding STARS to include higher education data submitted by postsecondary institutions (to begin February 1, 2009, approximately \$2.0 million); and
- Phase 3: adding enhancements, such as a common online application for admission to college and electronic transcribing between P-12 and public postsecondary institutions (at an estimated annual cost of \$2.3 million, with timeline to be determined).

Taking into account the recommendations of the Data Sharing Task Force, the LESC endorsed legislation to support the implementation of the common P-20 student ID during the 2008 Legislature by:

- codifying the requirements for a comprehensive P-20 data warehouse (STARS) at PED that collects, integrates, and reports data from PED, HED, and other agencies; and
- appropriating \$3.9 million to PED to integrate the common PED/HED student ID into STARS.

In its analysis of the legislation, PED estimated that the cost of phasing in the P-20 data warehouse over two years would total almost \$4.0 million, and maintaining the system would cost an additional \$300,000 per year. However, the legislation was ruled not germane, and did not pass.

The remainder of this report addresses the work of PED and HED toward common P-20 student ID number. The report:

- reviews the PED application for a federal Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) grant;
- identifies the issues with the ID number's establishment, and
- provides LESC staff recommendations that the committee may wish to consider.

Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Grant

The Data Sharing Task Force continued to work through part of the 2008 interim, collaborating with PED and HED on an application for a total of \$9.0 million in federal SLDS grants, including:

- \$6.0 million for a foundational grant, awarded over three years, to “build an educational user interface capable of responding to constituent needs and implement an instructional management system”; and
- \$3.0 million for a concurrent expansion grant, also awarded over three years, to “work in a partnership with [HED] to develop and implement the postsecondary/agency component of STARS.”

According to the grant application, the funding “would allow the state to build postsecondary linkages (unique student ID, teacher ID, and data warehouse) that would complete the P-20 longitudinal system originally envisioned by the state. This would allow comprehensive decision-making to take place within the entire educational pipeline, across a lifetime of learning.” PED reports that the grant applications are currently under review, and the awardees will likely be announced in January or February 2009.

Issues

During the 2008 interim LESC staff requested an update on the progress of the implementation of the common P-20 student ID. On October 28, 2008, HED identified four challenges that the departments faced in assigning PED ID numbers to students in public postsecondary institutions. They are:

- 1) Public postsecondary institutions experience difficulty in assigning the PED student ID to students upon enrollment: the PED student ID number is not included on high school transcripts, and students rarely know their own ID number.
- 2) Community colleges’ open enrollment policies do not currently require high school transcripts for admission. In this instance, even if the transcripts did contain the PED student ID number, the community college would need some other mechanism for obtaining the ID. HED further reported that community colleges have had limited success collecting PED IDs from dual credit forms because the field for the PED student ID number is often left blank.
- 3) The current version of Banner software used by public postsecondary institutions does not allow student databases to be searched by the PED student ID number.
 - HED and public postsecondary institution staff has indicated that upgrading the software to Banner 8 would enable the institutions to search their databases by multiple ID numbers, including the PED student ID number, thereby addressing this issue.

- The 2008 Legislature reauthorized a 2007 appropriation for \$1.0 million to extend the time of expenditure and to change the purpose to “bring institutions of higher education using banner to version 8 of the enterprise resource planning system and to enhance the ability to share student data between higher education institutions and the student and teacher accountability reporting system in the public education department.”
 - HED reports that the funds were certified by the Department of Information Technology and released by the Department of Finance and Administration in August 2008. HED has allocated all of the funds to the 21 postsecondary institutions that use Banner, and adds that as of December 12, 2008 one institution – New Mexico Highlands University – has completed the upgrade.
- 4) The PED student ID number, like a student’s Social Security number and some institutions’ Banner IDs, is a 9-digit numeric. These other ID numbers can interfere with a search for the PED student ID number. As with issue #3 above, public postsecondary institution staff reports that this issue would be resolved with the upgrade to Banner 8.

LESC Staff Recommendations

LESC staff met with representatives from PED and HED on November 24, 2008, to address issues affecting the development of a common P-20 student ID number, including the issues identified above. Considering the revenue shortfall affecting the state in FY 09 and FY 10, as well as the fact that the recipients of the SLDS grant have yet to be announced, all parties agreed that any actions to further the implementation of the common P-20 student ID number would need to have a minimal fiscal impact. Taking input from both departments into consideration, LESC staff recommend that the committee consider the following policy options:

- Creating a new section in law that would phase in the creation of a P-20 educational data warehouse. LESC staff recommend that the first phase include the assignment of the PED student ID number to public high school students that enroll in a public postsecondary educational institution after graduating or when participating in the dual credit program.
- To enable the PED student ID to be more efficiently transferred to public postsecondary educational institutions, LESC staff recommend:
 - Amending statute to require that the PED student ID number be included on all high school transcripts and General Educational Development (GED) certificates. Such a statutory requirement would address the above issue regarding the difficulties that postsecondary institutions face in obtaining a student’s PED student ID number.

The above recommendation, however, would not address the issue for community colleges, which do not require transcripts or GED certificates for admission. LESC staff therefore recommend that HED, PED, and community colleges provide the committee with a plan for assigning the PED student ID number to students enrolling in community colleges.

- Requiring that forms completed by secondary students participating in the dual credit program include the student's PED student ID number. This requirement would enable public postsecondary institutions (including community colleges) to assign the PED student ID number to at least a portion of their enrolled students.
- Requesting that PED, HED, and public postsecondary educational institutions collaborate during the 2009 interim to address additional issues regarding the implementation of the P-20 student ID. Of particular importance is the assignment of the P-20 ID to other public postsecondary students that need to be tracked in a fully implemented P-20 data system, including:
 - students that enroll in community colleges; and
 - students that were not graduated from public secondary schools (out-of-state and private-school students, or students with GED certificates).